



Rabbi Jonah Pesner
Director

Isabel P. "Liz" Dunst, Chair
Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism

202.387.2800

Fax: 202.667.9070 E-mail: rac@uri.org

Arthur and Sara Jo Kobacker
Building
2027 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
at Kivie Kaplan Way
Washington, DC 20036

Visit our website at www.rac.org

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Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of the Union for Reform Judaism, whose over 900 congregations encompass 1.5 million Jews across North America, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis, which represents over 2,000 Reform rabbis, I urge you to support H.R. 4100, which would require the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to undertake remediation oversight of the West Lake Landfill located in Bridgeton, Missouri.

For decades, residents near West Lake landfill have lived with toxic nuclear waste polluting their air and water. The thousands of tons of radioactive waste dumped in the landfill in 1973 have caused grave concern for residents of Bridgeton and beyond. For example, a 2014 Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services report found unusually high rates of cancer in the eight zip codes surrounding the West Lake landfill. In addition to the current health concerns this waste causes for residents of the area, the toxic waters contaminated from the landfill have the potential to enter the Missouri River and eventually the Mississippi River as well, impacting communities across the country.

The EPA has designated the landfill as a Superfund site and has been working for 25 years to contain radioactivity, with little progress. Recent fires at nearby landfills have shown the need for immediate action. If the fires reach the radioactive material, there is the potential for this waste to become airborne and spread across an even greater range. The Army Corps of Engineers oversees the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program and has experience containing radioactive contamination, making them well suited to handle the West Lake landfill.

As a Reform Jewish community, we are inspired by our tradition that teaches us that we were placed in the Garden of Eden to "till and tend" (Genesis 2:15) the land and that we must be *shomrei adamah*, guardians of the land. We must act as custodians of our planet and all its inhabitants to ensure justice for all: access to safe, clean air to breathe and water to drink.

The Senate has already voted in bipartisan support of this effort and we now urge you to also support H.R. 4100 and require the Secretary of the Army to undertake remediation oversight of the West Lake Landfill located in Bridgeton, Missouri.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner



The Religious Action Center pursues social justice and religious liberty by mobilizing the Jewish community and serving as its advocate in Washington, D.C. The Center is led by the Commission on Social Action of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and the Union for Reform Judaism (and its affiliates) and is supported by the congregations of the Union.

